



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

and fully abreast with contemporary movements of thought. It would have gained, however, by some such exactness of method as characterizes Wobbermin's work. The author's practice of giving a historical survey of what has been thought and said upon each several topic which he takes up, beginning almost *de novo* in each case, interferes with the impression of the forward movement of his own thought, and perhaps has obscured somewhat a lack of full correlation between the various parts of his work.

EUGENE W. LYMAN

OBERLIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

---

### UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO SERMONS

There are those who believe that powerful preaching is a lost art. Jonathan Edwards, Chalmers, Spurgeon, Beecher, are giants of the past who cannot be equaled today. Where would one find sermons to match those of Martineau or Edward Everett Hale in their beauty of literary form and their mellow ripeness? Is there a living man in the pulpit who will leave behind him such volumes of sermons as those of Phillips Brooks or F. W. Robertson? Even if there were great preachers, would their sermons find enough readers to pay for their publication?

Such statements cannot, however, be lightly affirmed, or such questions quickly answered in the negative, without injustice to the real state of things. Most of the powerful preachers of the past were stimulated to unusual achievements by some great social or national crisis or by some exceptional religious awakening which followed an age of barrenness when there was no prophet in the land. Similar conditions will produce similar effects in the future. Again, it must be considered that the mental habits and the ecclesiastical conditions of the past, when the church-going public looked to the pulpit for information and intellectual guidance on all questions, and when the church had not recognized the claim or heeded the challenge of social problems, gave the preacher an opportunity and furnished him the leisure for sermon making which the minister of the present lacks. To develop literary charm or oratorical excellence requires leisure, time for pruning, exercise in the art of expression, to the exclusion of other things which are now held to be more essential. Still further, whatever may be said of the exceptional heroes of the pulpit, the *average* of preaching is higher now than in the age of the Wesleys and the Beechers. The days of formal pulpit eloquence, of long sermons with purple patches and florid descriptions of Swiss scenery,

are gone. Men today want something less flowery, more direct, more workman-like. If the competition of the newspaper and the sensationalism of the headliner have betrayed the superficial pulpiteer into methods unworthy of his calling or degrading to his message, the spirit of criticism and research which enters every precinct of human thought and endeavor is holding the teacher of religion to a strict account; and there is scarcely a denomination, even in sect-ridden America, whose ministry is not showing the effect for good in a gradually rising standard of excellence.

Meantime, there is good reason to suppose that the present age feels the need of spiritual ideals, of moral and religious motives and quietives, as much as any other. To satisfy that need grows increasingly difficult, to be sure. The pulpit is in competition with many agencies which either share its field or draw its hearers from the pews to other scenes, to sit, perhaps, on the bleachers of a baseball park, or possibly in the seats of the scornors who have outgrown prayers and sermons. But deep in the heart of every serious man and woman are roots of life which are nourished only by reverence, which feed upon those primal elements of faith and hope and love that flourish best in the religious atmosphere. Growing intelligence does not lessen the pangs of conscious evil, the stress of sudden sorrow, or the strain of continued moral pressure in a world whose complexity grows apace in every region of experience. Most people who read at all crave a touch of religion in the literature they favor in their more serious moods. It may be that good preaching will be sought out more eagerly in the near future than it was in the immediate past.

Preaching is truth conveyed through personality; good preaching depends as much on the character and responsiveness of the hearers as on the solid ability of the preacher. Sermons which have proved worthy to represent the best religious thought and feeling of their generation were usually preached to discerning listeners. Only a combination of good preachers and appreciative audiences could have produced such a set of discourses as those found in the volume of *University of Chicago Sermons*<sup>1</sup> published early this year. These sermons were preached by professors in the Divinity and allied departments of the University of Chicago, many of them being given at the regular Sunday morning religious services of the University. They were not made with the idea of publication, but represent the occasional pulpit ministry of these men

<sup>1</sup> *University of Chicago Sermons*. Edited by Theodore Gerald Soares. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1915. xii+348 pages. \$1.50.

to the churches. The volume contains eighteen sermons whose authors represent the departments of Sociology, Philosophy, History, Education and Comparative Religion, in addition to the Divinity School. There is a suggestive introductory essay, by the editor, on "The Need of Power in American Preaching," which none ought to skip. The first sermon will have added interest to many scores of readers because it was one of the last delivered by the beloved chaplain of the University, the late Professor Charles Richmond Henderson.

These sermons will be welcomed by every type of thoughtful person, of whatever creed or school, who desires to discover the trend of religious thought in its more dynamic forms. They might not stir the popular audience which is out for a sensation; but if they are as widely read as they deserve to be by ministers, teachers of religion, thoughtful laymen looking for light, they will advance the quality of many another sermon and prepare many a hearer to listen with greater discrimination. It would be difficult to gather into one volume of 350 pages a group of sermons which could cover more thoroughly and suggestively the great fundamental ideas, feelings and convictions which underlie all genuine religious experience. What is the real Test of Religion? What are the foundations of that Everlasting Kingdom of Righteousness with which the gospel of Jesus deals? Is the idea of God a mere hypothesis covering our ignorance, or is there some eternal, divine reality, transcending the Manufactured Gods of our self-will, which sanctions the confidence of the human soul in a power that creates a growing structure of enduring life in the midst of daily decay? Is there a Voice of God which can be understood, and is Prayer a mode of communion which intelligent men may use, which will satisfy "the craving of the blind for light, of the hungry for bread, of the oppressed for justice, of the weary for rest," and fill the hearts of men with genuine praise for the wonder and mystery of life? Wherein do the true Riches of Life consist? How shall we interest the race in those nobler values the investment of which would produce a "steady output of men and women of progressively higher quality"? The sermon titles of this volume (repeated in these queries) suggest answers to such questions as these, and, whether we agree with all of them or not, the answers are sincere, profound, and provocative of further thought. The reader is captured by a new faith in that Revival of Idealism the hope of which is set forth in such vivid terms in one of the best of these fine sermons; an idealism which unites all God's messengers who have caught visions of truth from noble heights and have

led men to believe that "God's best strikes hands with our best, and every man's best is equal in the sight of God."

If ministers and students of homiletics were to use this book of sermons as a guide to re-examine the factors with which the preacher must deal in order to be effective—the fundamental ideas which underlie our religion, the motives for faith and action, the quietives for fears or troubles—there is no doubt in the reviewer's mind that the process would serve a most desirable object. What were the inherited convictions and impulses which issued in the religion of Jesus? What more was there in that religion? What was new in the faith and experience of the early Christian church? What elements in the New Testament are the essential deposit of racial experience, the elements of faith and hope which will always be operative and which are contingent upon passing conditions or circumstances, the product of outgrown ideas, customs and formalities? What is the meaning of that prophetic attitude of religion which looks for the fulfilment of the profoundest hopes, not in the matching of events and beliefs with ancient words or symbols, but in the realization of the will of God in the souls of living men? What is the abiding significance of Jesus through the matchless influence of his spirit? How did the Christian doctrine of the atonement come into being and how is it actually related to what Jesus thought of his own death? If the teaching of Paul, as the chief interpreter of primitive Christian beliefs, has given shape to much of our theology, by what authority was he led and how is that authority operative now? Is it not true that if we are to discover the will of God for our day we must both "glean from the yesterdays what they have to give" and "turn to the present and the future there to find the ultimate authority for our religion" as the Spirit guides *us*? Recognizing the remarkable "persistence with which Christian faith has insisted upon the better future as the source of hope and courage," how can we make Christian men more faithful in the pursuit of that righteousness which will fit them to be worthy members of the Kingdom of Righteousness when it shall come, and so fulfil in our day and way the ancient vision of the New Heaven and the New Earth? Least of all in these active days of ferment can it be held that religion consists in any kind of institution or formality; it must be held that Christian men and women are like salt in the world to cure its corruption. Religion is not sugar-water, it is not sweetness thinly spread; it is the salt of the earth if it is worth anything—sharp and stringent in its anti-sepsis where any moral disease or plague threatens.

Having read these sermons with such questions in mind, questions suggested and answered by the sermons themselves, one cannot fail to be inspired anew with the wealth and power of the motives and ideals with which it is the noble privilege of the pulpit to deal. So far from losing faith in the "preaching of the Word," one is impressed with a fresh sense of the dignity of the Christian message, and stimulated with a new desire to prove with solid reasons that the church has a message for the modern world. There are multitudes today, as ever, who are seeking eagerly the way to the unseen; some are sad; many are weary; most lose faith and courage now and then. Death invades all homes sooner or later; the depths of sorrow are plumbed by thousands every day. Thank God that there are those who can interpret even death in its noble function; men who have learned by deep experiences of their own that "in the gospel of Jesus, in the Kingdom of God, there is the apocalypse of a world other and higher than our world of shadows and of dust!"

Truly, if the American pulpit lacks power, the reason does not lie in the subject-matter with which the preacher deals, the values of the religion which he ought to interpret. This volume of sermons may well convince both the pulpit and the pew that there is a dynamic in the modern point of view in religion which is able not only to win the reason, but to stir the will to noble conquests.

O. C. HELMING

CHICAGO, ILL.

---

#### EARLY ZOROASTRIANISM<sup>1</sup>

In Moulton's recent interpretation of early Zoroastrianism the style is very opaque. The overlapping and confusion of order make it difficult to follow the arguments, which sway back and forth, like a swinging pendulum, and never come to rest. The book deals, however, with a very tangled skein of facts which do not allow of an easy methodical unraveling. Moulton propounds many new and valuable theories but does not suppress or distort evidence in order to make his own theories seem more plausible than they really are. He has utilized all the most recent material, including even the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (ed. 11) and the first five volumes of Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*. He has done a great service in impartially sifting all the evidence and analyzing all the possibilities. More facts and time alone

<sup>1</sup> *Early Zoroastrianism*. The Hibbert Lectures for 1912, second series. By James Hope Moulton. London: Williams & Norgate, 1913. xx+468 pages. 10s. 6d.